

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 184

BY SENATOR LUNEAU

A RESOLUTION

To establish and provide for a task force to study health care outcomes in this state, with particular emphasis on access to care and the role that physician assistants should play to assist with the shortage of health care providers, particularly in the area of primary care medicine, and to report the results of its study and recommendations to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.

WHEREAS, the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana recognizes the necessity of establishing a task force to study health care outcomes in this state, with particular emphasis on access to care and the critical shortage of health care providers, particularly in the area of primary care medicine; and

WHEREAS, the state's expansion of Medicaid to cover an additional substantial segment of the population that did not previously have access to health insurance has created an additional demand for health care services, exacerbated by the growing shortage of health care professionals and geographic maldistribution of health care services in this state; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic created an unprecedented health care emergency, in response to which the governor issued Executive Order 41 JBE 2020, authorizing physician assistants (PAs), among other health care providers, to provide critically needed services to those in need of health care during this time; and

WHEREAS, the public and the health care community were well served by the PA practice during this period, without adverse outcomes, and greatly enhanced the availability of health care to those in need thereof, particularly in medically underserved areas of the state, raising the awareness of the efficacy and utility of PA care in the absence of a health care emergency; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana continues to rank at the bottom of virtually every health care analysis as it relates to the provision of health care to its citizens, the health care outcomes

resulting therefrom, and the general health of our state's population; and

WHEREAS, PAs are health care professionals qualified by academic and clinical education and competencies, who are licensed by the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners to provide health care services to the citizens of Louisiana, and who have passed the national certifying examination for PAs, so that a high quality of care is assured; and

WHEREAS, the safety and efficacy of health care provided by PAs in a variety of medical settings has been proven during the recent health care emergency, thus demonstrating the wisdom of reevaluating limitations on PA practice; and

WHEREAS, the sharply rising costs of all aspects of health care mandate that a more efficient health care delivery system be considered, including the delivery of circumscribed health care services by PAs in certain proscribed settings and circumstances, when appropriate and consistent with the PA's qualifications, academic and clinical training, experience and competencies to provide such health care services; and

WHEREAS, there is growing national support for the removal of practice barriers for PAs which have been proven successful, cost-effective, and have provided a practical system of providing health care to medically underserved areas, including in the states of North Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, and Maine.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby establish a task force to study health care outcomes in this state, with particular emphasis on access to care and the role that physician assistants should play to assist with the shortage of health care providers, particularly in the area of primary care medicine, and to consider the programs of the states of North Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, and Maine as potential models for the improved integration of PAs into health care delivery.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consist of the following members:

- (1) Three members designated by the governor.
- (2) One member designated by the president of the Senate.
- (3) One member designated by the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.
- (4) One member designated by the dean of the Louisiana State University School of

Allied Health Professions, Physician Assistants Program in Shreveport.

(5) The three physician assistant members of the Advisory Committee of Physician Assistants of the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners.

(6) One member designated by the president of the Louisiana Academy of Physician Assistants.

(7) One member designated by the president of the Louisiana Hospital Association, and

(8) Two members of the Louisiana State Medical Society; one representing family medicine, the other a surgical specialty; both of whom are currently registered with the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners as supervising physicians of physician assistants.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each designating authority shall submit their respective designees to the chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare no later than July 1, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall convene for its first meeting no later than August 15, 2021, at the call of the chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare and at the first meeting, the members shall elect a chairman and other officers as the task force may deem appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the task force shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. All official actions of the task force shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall serve without compensation, except per diem or expenses reimbursement to which they may be individually entitled as members of their constituent organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a report on the results of the study undertaken pursuant to this Resolution, and any recommendations resulting therefrom, to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare on or before December 31, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the office of the governor, the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the physician assistant members of the Advisory Committee of Physician Assistants of the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners, the dean of the Louisiana State University School of Allied

SR NO. 184

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Health Professions, Shreveport, the president of the Louisiana Academy of Physician Assistants, the president of the Louisiana Hospital Association, and the executive director of the Louisiana State Medical Society.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE